

GUIDELINE NO: 3.5
Drinking Water Operator/Water Quality Analyst Certification
Prepared: March 2005

**GUIDELINE TITLE: RECIPROCITY - RECOGNITION OF CERTIFICATES SECURED IN
OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

PURPOSE

To explain the process for securing recognition of an operator or water quality analyst (WQA) certificate gained in a jurisdiction other than Ontario including applications from:

- a. jurisdictions that are a signatory to the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement
- b. Quebec
- c. the U.S.A.

Note: reference to a 'certificate' includes both a certificate or licence – depending on the term used in the originating jurisdiction

CONTEXT

All provinces except for Quebec are members of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC), as are more than 40 states in the U.S. Member jurisdictions adopt the ABC certification model where certification is based on meeting education and experience qualifications, and passing a certification exam. Through their Testing Service the ABC provides nationally validated standardized exams for certifying operators to their members. The ABC also provides a certifying service, where they determine whether an individual meets the certification program requirements. Although the individual may still have to meet additional requirements of the certifying authority in the jurisdiction to which they are moving, it avoids the need for the new certifying authority to retest such individual.

Ontario and the other provinces, except for Quebec, also signed the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement, indicating they will recognize the validity of the certificates issued by the provinces that signed the Agreement.

MINISTRY POLICY

APPLICANTS FROM PROVINCES THAT SIGNED THE RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT

Ontario will accept the certificate of an operator or water quality analyst from a province that is a signatory to the Canadian Reciprocity Agreement, provided the certificate or licence was secured through passing an exam, rather than through being grandparented.

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The person wishing to have their certificate recognized under the Reciprocity Agreement must:

- complete the Reciprocity Application Form, Form No. 1857 (which can be obtained from the Certification Program Administrator's web site)
- submit a photocopy of the certificate or licence they received from the other province
- pay the appropriate fee

The Certification Program Administrator, who administers Ontario's Operator/WQA Certification Program will:

- secure written verification from the province that issued the original certificate that such certificate is valid and that to the knowledge of the province there are no performance issues against the operator or WQA, nor any reasons the certificate should have been revoked or suspended by the originating province
- secure written verification from the originating province that the certificate was obtained by passing an ABC affiliated exam

If the operator or WQA fails to submit the required document and fee as described above, or the Certification Program Administrator is unable to verify as described above, then the out of province person will not be able to secure an Ontario certificate under the reciprocity arrangements. Rather, the person must meet the full requirements, which for an operator means securing an operator-in-training (OIT) certificate, and for a water quality analyst means meeting the training and experience requirements, and passing the WQA exam.

Certificate Upgrade – Experience and Training

Experience: A person can apply to secure a certificate of a higher class than the one secured in another province that is a signatory to the Reciprocity Agreement.

Ontario will accept the experience gained in such other province. The applicant must complete the Drinking Water Certificate Application Form, Form No. 1854, indicating the certificate level they are applying for. They must secure in the appropriate section of the Form the signature of the owner or the supervisor of the facility in which the operator worked, verifying the experience gained by the applicant while working in that province. Alternatively experience can be verified by the certifying body of the other province by having such certification body sign the form in the place provided.

Training: Where the applicant for a certificate upgrade does not have the training required by Ontario for that class of certificate, Ontario may issue a conditional certificate at that level, containing the condition that the required training be completed within the time specified on the conditional certificate.

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APPLICANTS FROM QUEBEC

In order for operators or WQAs from Quebec to receive an Ontario certificate of the same type and class as the Quebec issued certificate, they must pass the certification exam for that type and class of certificate. However, Ontario will recognize the experience and education the person acquired while working in Quebec.

The person wishing to have an Ontario certificate of the same type and class as they held in Quebec must:

- complete the Drinking Water Certificate Application Form, Form No. 1854, (which can be obtained from the Certification Program Administrator's web site. They must secure in the appropriate section of the Form the signature of the owner or the supervisor of the facility in which the operator worked, verifying the education and experience gained by the applicant while working in Quebec. Alternatively experience and education can be verified by the certifying body of Quebec by having the certification body sign the form in the place provided.
- submit a photocopy of the certificate they hold and wish to have replaced by an Ontario that is equivalent
- provide the contact name and number of the certifying body in Quebec
- pay the appropriate fee

The Certification Program Administrator, who administers Ontario's Operator/WQA Certification Program will:

- secure written verification from Quebec that the person's certificate is valid and that to the knowledge of the province there are no performance issues against the operator or WQA, nor any reasons the certificate should have been revoked or suspended by the originating province

APPLICANTS FROM THE US

Ontario will recognize certificates from operators or water quality analysts from the US. if the state is a member of the Association of Boards of Certification, and if the state provides the same recognition to operators and water quality analysts from Ontario.

The person wishing to have their certificate recognized must:

- complete the Reciprocity Application Form, Form No. 1857 (which can be obtained from the Certification Program Administrator's web site
- submit a photocopy of the certificate they hold and wish to have recognized by Ontario
- provide the contact name and number of the state certifying body
- pay the appropriate fee

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Ontario's Certification Program Administrator will:

- secure written verification from the state that issued the original certificate that such certificate is valid and that to the knowledge of the state there are no performance issues against the operator or WQA, nor any reasons the certificate or licence should have been revoked or suspended by the originating province
- secure written verification from the state that the certificate was obtained by passing an ABC affiliated exam
- secure in writing details on the certification program of the state in order to determine how comparable the certificate qualifying requirements are to that of Ontario.

Should the certificate qualifying requirements from the state be determined as equivalent or more rigorous than Ontario's requirements, the Director may issue an Ontario certificate of the same type and class as that presently held by the applicant.

If the certificate qualifying requirements from the state are determined to be less rigorous than that of Ontario, the Director may issue a lower level certificate to the applicant, or a conditional certificate. Where a conditional certificate is issued, the applicant will be required to meet specific conditions, such as secure the training normally required for a certificate of the type and class for which the applicant has been issued conditionally.

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